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# **News Release**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Wednesday, May 20, 2009

## **Prior Lake man indicted for distributing controlled substances**

The owner of a pharmaceutical company that collects outdated, recalled or excess controlled substances was indicted yesterday in federal court for allegedly distributing controlled substances.

Mark Andrew Goetz, 40, Prior Lake, was charged with one count of distribution of alprazolam and one count of distribution of oxycodone and alprazolam. Goetz's indictment alleges that on Jan. 10 he knowingly and intentionally distributed approximately 99 tablets of Xanax, which contained alprazolam. It also alleges that on May 6 Goetz distributed approximately 1,274 tablets of Oxycontin, which contained oxycodone, and an additional 245 tablets of Xanax.

According to a Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) affidavit, Goetz owns Pharmaceutical Returns, a company that is a reverse distributor of controlled substances. The company, located in Northfield, is authorized by the DEA to collect the substances, return them to drug companies for credit or destroy them at approved incinerators.

In January 2009 the Metro Gang Strike Task Force learned that Goetz was distributing controlled substances he obtained from DEA registrants to drug customers just prior to or shortly after scheduled destructions of evidence. Officers arranged a controlled purchase on Jan. 10 at Goetz's residence of 99 tablets of Xanax. A second controlled purchase of 1,274 tablets of Oxycontin and 245 tablets of Xanax was conducted by the DEA and the task force on May 6 in a parking lot of a south Minneapolis apartment complex.

Goetz was stopped by police as he was leaving the parking lot, and officers seized a small amount of a controlled substance and a laptop computer.

If convicted, Goetz faces a potential maximum penalty of 20 years in prison on the distribution count involving oxycodone and three years in prison on the alprazolam distribution count. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge.

This case is the result of an investigation by the Metro Gang Strike Task Force and the DEA. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Thomas M. Hollenhorst.

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An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by a defendant. A defendant, of course, is presumed innocent until he or she pleads guilty or is proven guilty at trial.